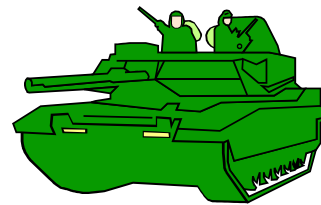


WAR! SEX! MONEY!

Did one of these words get your attention? These are the kinds of things that virus writers, spammers, and thieves use to get you to read or simply open your email. They pique your curiosity with current events, titillating subjects, or incredible proposals. Whether they want to compromise your system and spread malicious code, harvest your e-mail account, or just want to get your money, they can all do their dirty work only if you let them. Beware, be aware, and keep yourself and your system safe. Don't open attachments from unknown and untrusted sources. Don't open Spam messages, and if you accidentally do, don't reply to them. And no one will ever give you millions of dollars just for helping them transfer money.

Here are some examples of these issues, things that can sometimes only be defeated or mitigated by using good judgment and secure practices:

Current events sometimes bring out the worst in people. Virus writers used the September 11th tragedy to propagate viruses through e-mail, slideshows, and screen savers. It has happened again with the onset of the U.S.-Iraqi war, in e-mails supposedly containing spy photos of Iraq, but in reality containing the W32/Ganda-A worm. The practice will probably expand into war photos, 'patriotic' slideshows, or other eye-catching media.



Spam accounts for almost 40% of all e-mail messages on the Internet. ITD systems filter a lot for us, but some still occasionally get through. Just delete them and forget them. If you seem to get a lot with the same subject heading, you can always create your own e-mail filter for your account.

Identity Theft and Fraud continue to grow on the Internet. Pleas for money might be like any of the following:

URGENT BUSINESS ASSISTANCE
URGENT REPLY NEEDED FOR MORE INFO
VERY CONFIDENTIAL
RELOCATION OF FUNDS FOR INVESTMENT
INVESTMENT/ASSISTANCE

These subject lines (a small sampling) have all come from spam that has at one time or another been seen in state email systems. These messages reputedly come from Nigerian ministers, Zaire oil-company managers, or even U.S. servicemen that want your help to transfer millions of dollars and are willing to give you 20%... Don't believe it, 'cause it just ain't so.



In the end, no matter what the method of attack is, be it virus, spam, or scam, you are the best, and sometimes only, defense. Be smart, and be safe.